

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 11454

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, PGOV, NI, KE
SUBJ: KENYAN ATTITUDES TOWARD NIGERIA

REF: STATE 208244

1. ALTHOUGH NIGERIA IS ACKNOWLEDGED BY KENYA AS ONE OF MOST IMPORTANT OAU MEMBERS, FOR THE MOST PART NIGERIA IS PERIPHERAL TO KENYA'S SECURITY INTERESTS. WITH RESPECT TO OTHER FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS THE SENIOR KENYAN CIVIL SERVANT IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PUT IT WELL WHEN HE SAID "WE KENYANS ARE AN INSULAR PEOPLE." COMMENTS BELOW ON KENYA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD NIGERIA SHOULD BE READ IN THIS LIGHT.

2. NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT: KENYA PRIDES ITSELF ON HAVING A REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN WHICH ELECTED CIVILIANS CONTROL THE MILITARY. IT FEELS LITTLE KINSHIP WITH THE CURRENT NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT, BUT RECOGNIZES THAT AT THIS STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT, MILITARY RULE MAY BE NECESSARY TO OVERCOME TRIBAL DIVISIONS. RELATIONS ARE CORDIAL IF NOT PARTICULARLY CLOSE.

3. NIGERIA'S ROLE IN AFRICA: KENYA DISAGREED WITH NIGERIA'S POSITION ON ANGOLA, BUT IS RELATIVELY CLOSE TO NIGERIA ON
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RHODESIA, NAMIBIA AND APARTHEID ISSUES. KENYA HAS ACCEPTED NIGERIA'S OFFER TO ATTEMPT TO MEDIATE KENYA-TANZANIA DISPUTE OVER BREAKUP OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT NIGERIA WAS NOT KENYA'S FIRST CHOICE FOR THIS ROLE. SOME KENYANS HAD UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS THAT NIGERIA MIGHT SELL OIL AT CONCESSIONAL PRICES TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES, AND NIGERIA'S FAILURE TO SHARE ITS OIL WEALTH IS

SOMEWHAT RESENTED BY RESOURCE-POOR KENYA.

4. NIGERIA AS SPOKESMAN FOR AFRICA: KENYA PROBABLY PAYS
SOME HEED TO POSITIONS TAKEN BY NIGERIA IN UN, G-77 AND
SIMILAR BODIES. HOWEVER, KENYA WOULD NOT AGREE THAT NIGERIA
SHOULD HAVE ANY SORT OF AFRICAN SUPERPOWER ROLE IN THE WORLD,
NOR SHOULD IT ATTEMPT TO REPRESENT THE WHOLE CONTINENT IN
WORLD COUNCILS ANY MORE THAN IDI AMIN SHOULD.
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